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A
LONG
RANGE
MASTER
SITE
PLAN

Giant Springs — Heritage State Park

Prepared by Parks Division

Department of Fish and Game

Montana State Library



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The Area



On their monumental mission of exploration, it took Lewis and Clark 27 days to make portage around the Great Falls of the Missouri. Despite the hard work, this delay left plenty of time for exploration. It was on June 18, 1805, that captain Lewis discovered "...the largest fountain I ever saw..." while exploring the south bank of the Missouri. Indeed the fresh water spring found by Lewis is a giant, probably the largest in the world. It well deserves its name, Giant Springs.

The significance of the Great Falls was not lost by the pioneer developer and industrialist, Paris Gibson. Their power, he correctly foresaw could prove the basis of an important, prosperous community. Neither, however, was the significance of the Giant Springs lost upon Paris Gibson. He knew that any prosperous industrial city, if it is to be livable, must make room for scenic beauty, recreation and leisure. The Giant Springs could provide exactly these resources.

Over the years, the residents of Great Falls have come to agree with the visionary Paris Gibson, Giant Springs, adjacent to the state fish hatchery, is the site of an important and immensely popular state park.



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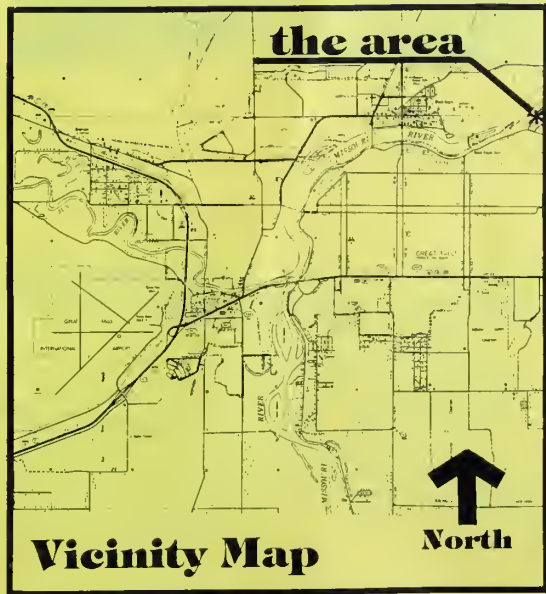
<https://archive.org/details/giantspringsheri1977mont>

Existing Use and Facilities

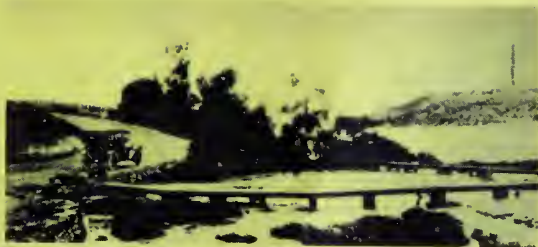
Giant Springs State Park is used predominately by residents of and visitors to Great Falls and surrounding towns as a classic day-use park. Here small groups, families and local clubs gather to picnic, to enjoy the scenery, to gaze at the Giant Springs, to visit the adjacent fish hatchery, and to play games—badminton, croquet, frisbee and others. Here there is room to socialize with friends and family—but not much room.

Giant Springs is crowded to say the least so in anticipation of the day when use would exceed the capacity of the park, land to the south of Giant Springs was acquired. This acquisition, known as Heritage Park, was firmly supported by the people of Great Falls even to the extent of significant private donations. [REDACTED]

The Heritage Park area currently has few facilities or provisions for use. This project would provide for major development with emphasis on large and small group use. Major picknicking areas would be built along with the necessary traffic flow and parking facilities. The area would be landscaped, two trails developed and irrigation provided for. These developments would make Heritage Park a useful portion of the Giant Springs complex.







Funding

Planning efforts over the past decade have consistently indicated that the area around Great Falls is chronically short of suitable recreation areas. This problem has generated an unusual degree of public participation in recreation planning and development. This participation in Heritage Park has included "cash on the barrel-head." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Private donations and contributions were an important factor in the purchase and early development of Heritage Park and they will be an important factor in its future development. While the proposed project is for \$276,000, only \$69,000 of this will come directly from the state and this amount will be matched by private donations. The balance will come from available federal funds.

Cost Estimate

1. Paving	\$ 17,260.00
2. Curb & Gutter	21,600 00
3. Garbage Cans	1,750.00
4. Orientation Area	23,730.00
5. Lower Pedestrian Trail	11,000.00
6. Group Picnicking	13,900.00
7. Riverside Picnic Area	79,155 00
8. Upper Pedestrian Trail	27,400.00
9. Irrigation System	<u>18,800.00</u>

Engineering, Inspection, Surveying and Contingencies	<u>\$ 41,405.00</u>
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GRAND TOTAL	\$276,000.00
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